



Apply now for grants to grow local food markets

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MADISON – Since its inception in 2008, the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program has generated \$6 million in new local food sales. Farmers and others in Wisconsin’s food industry who want to grow their local markets are encouraged to apply in the 2015 round of grants. Managed by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the grants can help farms and business more efficiently process, market and distribute food in local markets including stores, schools and institutions.

“Just as a wide variety of foods makes for a healthy diet, a variety of farms and agribusinesses makes for a healthy economy,” said BLBW program manager Teresa Engel. “We encourage growers, processors and distributors of diverse products to apply, and we look forward to funding some innovative ideas.”

Pre-proposals must be received at DATCP by 4 p.m. Dec. 1. Each pre-proposal must include a cover page, a completed budget template and three-page project description. The necessary documents can be found online at http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin/BLBW_Grants.

Qualified projects selected during the pre-proposal round will be invited to complete a full proposal. The recipients will be announced in March 2015.

A total of \$200,000 is available in grant funding; the maximum award for each project is \$50,000. Grant applicants must provide a cash or in-kind match of at least 50 percent of the total project budget.

Qualified applicants include individuals, groups or businesses involved in Wisconsin production agriculture, food processing, food distribution, food warehousing, retail food establishments or agricultural tourism operations. Proposals could include collaborations or partnerships.

Since 2008, DATCP has awarded 29 BLBW grants for a total of \$825,400. The program has resulted in 124 jobs retained or created and has benefited 2,062 producers. To learn more about the program or its economic impacts, visit http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin/BLBW_Grants.

If you have questions about the application process, contact DATCP’s Grants Manager Juli Speck at 608-224-5134 or Juli.Speck@Wisconsin.gov.